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Why Can't We Just Get Along?

Managing a Multi Generational Workforce

Chris Youngberg
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NPIP
Non Profit Insurance Program

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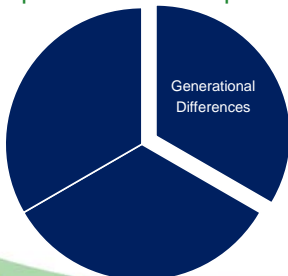...find the answer here

Why is it important?

- Miscommunication and conflict across the generations can negatively effect the following:
  - Productivity
  - Morale
  - Employee turnover
  - $$$

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Just one piece of the pie . . .

Generational Differences

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Words of Caution

- Not a trend
- Even Demographers disagree on time breaks
- There is no "right" generation
- Generational studies are generalizations
- Based on American influences
- Differences exist all over the world

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A Generation is . . .

- A group of people who come to share a common culture that provides them with a collective memory to sustain them over a finite period of time

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More to know . . .

- Most experts agree that common shared experiences define a generation
- Many of these shared experiences occur in the formative years of 11-15

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Generational Influences

- Historical Climate
- Economic Climate
- Social Climate
- Political Climate

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Workplace Generations

- Traditionalists: 1930–1945 (66-81)
- Baby Boomers: 1946–1964 (47-65)
- Generation X: 1965–1976 (35-46)
- Generation Y: 1977–1990 (21-34)
  - Millenials: 1991-2011(0-20)

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"People resemble their times more than they resemble their parents."

Arab proverb

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Embracing generational Differences

Graeme Codrington, Beth Kneupper and Pam Foster

Generational Quiz

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1. **My generation spent most Saturday nights**
   A. At the movies and then at the drug store
   B. At the bowling alley with friends
   C. Cruising main street in our hot cars listening to Blondie
   D. Talking on the Internet with someone from China

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2. Some of my generation's favorite music was by
A. Frank Sinatra
B. Beatles
C. Madonna
D. Usher

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3. The first thing my generation wanted to buy after graduation was
A. A home
B. A car
C. A company
D. A personal computer

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4. In my generation birthday parties
A. Were only for rich people
B. Included a meal and cake I got to pick
C. Meant coming up with a cool new theme each year
D. Consisted of a jumping castle, a DJ and a caterer

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5. A favorite childhood toy of my generation was a
  A. Board game
  B. Hula Hoop or bicycle
  C. Barbie or GI Joe
  D. Game Boy/Playstation

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6. A favorite childhood drink of my generation was
  A. Coca-cola
  B. Kool-Aid
  C. Anything diet
  D. Starbucks

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7. One of the biggest fashion statements of my generation was
  A. Starched white shirts or girdles
  B. Bell bottoms or wooly sideburns
  C. Designer jeans or long bangs that stuck straight up
  D. Baggy low-riding pants or body piercing

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8. When my generation thinks of their fathers, they think about

   A. The good care he provided for the family
   B. The fun family vacations he took us on
   C. When he didn't live at home any longer
   D. My real dad or step dads?

9. If my generation got into trouble, our moms would

   A. Spank us
   B. Say "Wait until your father gets home!"
   C. Put us into time out
   D. Ignore us until she found a solution in a self-help book.

10. Brothers/sisters in my generation

   A. Played with us and helped us do chores
   B. Were fun till we became teens
   C. I see once a year, we both are so busy
   D. Which one? Step or real?

Generational Quiz

- Mostly A's - Traditionalist
- Mostly B's - Baby Boomer
- Mostly C's - Gen X
- Mostly D's – Gen Y/ Millenials

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You know you're a _____,

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Traditionalist: *A profile*

- World War II and Korean War
- Former Soviet Union launched Sputnik in 1957
- Conservative, fiscally prudent, and loyal
- Job Security

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Traditionalists

- Value in the Workplace
  - Experience acknowledged
  - Desire to mentor
  - Recognition for accomplishments
  - New and fresh challenges
  - Hands on technology training

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Baby Boomers: *A profile*

- After War . . . Lots of babies
- 1960's and 1970's
- Vietnam War
- Flower children of the 1960's the suits of the 1980's
- Most educated of the four

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Baby Boomers

- Value in the Workplace
  - Salary, status and titles are important, but far from everything
  - Flexible benefits
  - Job sharing options
  - Celebrates their successes

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Gen X: *A profile*

- Smallest segment of the population
- Recessed economy
- Politics never solves anything
- Listening to music evolution
- Emerging Technology

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Gen X

- Value in the Workplace
  - Approachable Supervisor
  - Time off
  - Flexible working hours
  - On-site childcare
  - Care packages for family
  - Encouraged involvement with kids
  - Telecommuting

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Gen Y: *A profile*

- Born in the fast lane
- Number one concern is safety
- Exposed shocking events
- Lived through one of the biggest booms
- Environmentally conscientious
- Technology!

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Gen Y

- Value in the Workplace
  - Responsibility and challenge
  - Production is rewarded over seniority
  - Constant feedback
  - Teams
  - Looking for managers to lead
  - Live each day to the fullest

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Definitions of work

| Boomers & Traditionalist | → | *Hours put in* |
| X, Y & Millenials | → | *Production and output* |

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Why we work?

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Traditionalists

✓ Mentor
✓ Continue working
✓ Volunteer
✓ Expertise and contribution

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Baby Boomers

✓ Next set of workplace options
✓ Walk the talk on work-life balance
✓ Enrich their present job

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Generation X

✓ Candid perspective and feedback
✓ Work independently / leverage their entrepreneurial abilities
✓ Get the most out of every job position

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Generation Y / Millenials

✓ Stability and long-term value of your organization
✓ Schedules that build careers/families
✓ Groups and teams

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A New Generation Gap

"The term Generation Gap was used mostly to describe conflicts between parents and children. Today, the "Gap" has more of a presence in the workplace, where employees from different generations are finding it difficult to work side by side because their **experiences, goals and expectations are different."**

GOVEXEC.com

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Managers who drive them crazy . . .

	Traditionalist	Baby Boomers	Gen X	Gen Y / M's
OUTLOOK	Practical	Optimistic	Skeptical	Hopeful
WORK ETHIC	Dedicated	Driven	Balanced	Ambitious
VIEW OF AUTHORITY	Respectful	Love/Hate	Unimpressed	Relaxed, polite
LEADERSHIP BY . . .	Hierarchy	Consensus	Competence	Achievement, Pulling together
RELATIONSHIPS	Self-sacrifice	Personal gratification	Reluctance to commit	Loyal, inclusive
PERSPECTIVE	Civic-minded	Team-oriented	Self-reliant	Civic-minded
TURN-OFFS	Vulgarity	Political incorrectness	Clichés, hype	Cynicism, condescension

Conflict Management

Traditionalists	Often not willing to confront a person in a supervisory position.
Baby Boomers	Like to bring the team together to resolve conflict.
Gen X	Ignore bosses who try to "parent" or micromanage them. They are very direct when there is something they disagree with or don't like.
Gen Y/ M's	Do not cope well with "in your face" conflict. Many could use coaching on confronting difficult people/issues in a positive and assertive way.

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Conflict

• **Work ethic**

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Conflict

• **Work/life balance**

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Conflict

- Loyalty

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Conflict

- Technology

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Conflict

What's on your list?

- Respect
- Career options
- Educational opportunities
- Dress code
- ?

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Managing Generations Successfully

1. Initiate conversations about generations
2. Ask people about their needs/preferences
3. Offer options
4. Personalize your style
5. Build on strengths
6. Pursue different perspectives

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Constructive feedback

Common to EVERYONE

- Focus on the issue
- Emphasize key points
- Be specific
- Other's point of view
- Avoid "hot button" language

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Providing constructive feedback across generations . . .

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General rule to follow . . .

- Golden Rule
- **Platinum Rule**

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Change is coming.

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Resources

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